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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/799,835	03/12/2004	Joe W. Ferguson	31132-222	8484
46333	7590	10/02/2008		
HAYNES AND BOONE, LLP 901 Main Street Suite 3100 Dallas, TX 75202			EXAMINER	
			COMSTOCK, DAVID C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3733	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			10/02/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/799,835	<b>Applicant(s)</b> FERGUSON ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b> DAVID COMSTOCK	<b>Art Unit</b> 3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 June 2008.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.      2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-12 and 22-33 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-12 and 22-33 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 October 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/8/07.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application  
 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's clarification of the status of the newly added claims with regard to the previously outstanding election requirement is acknowledged. Claims 1-12 and 22-33 are currently pending and are directed to the elected invention. Claims 13-21 were previously canceled by Applicant.

***Oath/Declaration***

The previous objection to the oath or declaration is withdrawn in view of Applicant's arguments filed 16 October 2007.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-12 and 22-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kim (US 2003/0055430).

Kim discloses the claimed invention including a distractor assembly 30 comprising distracting arms 50A and 50B. Distractor fasteners 26 are rotatable relative to the arms (see, e.g., Figs. 4, 9b and 14). Any edge surface of the device can be a guide for an instrument and the fasteners perform a cutting action as they are threaded into bone.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 16 October 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's arguments are not persuasive because they depend on limitations that are not claimed or they merely depend on an intended use of the apparatus. For example, it is noted that each anchoring device is rotatable relative to the corresponding distracting arm, at least, for example, when the anchoring device is not fully inserted and seated in the distracting arm. Applicant argues that section 38 has no space to rotate when the head portion 32 is received within the bore 104; however, this limitation is not found in the claims. Moreover, with regard to the meaning of "movably couple" it is noted that the distracto pins are capable of being rotated to various angular positions or orientations and coupled to the arms. As such, they can be considered to be movably coupled to the arms. That is, their orientation is not absolutely fixed with respect to the arms. In addition, Kim Clearly discloses first and second anchoring devices. Furthermore, Kim shows an *at least partially* spherical portion on the head of the pins (see, e.g. Fig. 3a). For example, the smooth rounded end or tip of portion 36 can be considered to be *at least partially* spherical. It is further noted that bore 104 can be considered to be a vertically extending slot. Regarding new claim 25, the device of Kim is capable of satisfying the limitations therein. For example, the arms are capable of pivoting about the head portions of the anchoring elements *when the bone engaging*

*portion of the anchoring elements are securely engaged with the vertebrae (as opposed to reciting, for example, when the anchoring elements are securely seated in the arms, or the like).*

***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-4710. Please leave a detailed voice message if examiner is unavailable. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo

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Robert can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/David Comstock/  
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733